THE BARREN TREE.

A

Sermon Preached at *Pauls* Crosse
October 26. 1623.

BY

THO: ADAMS.

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TO THE REVE-

rend and learned, Doctor DONNE, Deane of St. *Pauls*, together with the Prebend-Residentiaries of the same Church, my very *good Patrons*.

RIGHT WORSIPFVLL,

NOt out of any opinion of this Sermons worth, to which I dare not inuite your iudicious eyes. Nor, any ambition to merit of my Patrons, whom I read stiled, Petty creators. But in humble acknow-

ledgement of your fauours, I preſent this ſmall Rent of Thankefulneſſe; the poore fruit of that tree, which growes on your owne ground, and hath not from the world any other ſuſtenance. Vouchſafe, I beſeech you, your Patronage to the child, who haue made the Father of it,

Your VVors. deuoted

Homager

THO: ADAMS.

To the Reader.

INeither affect thoſe Rheumaticke Pennes, that are ſtill dropping vpon the Preſſe: nor thoſe Phlegmaticke ſpirits, that will ſcarſe bee coniur'd into the orbe of employment. But if modeſt forwardneſſe be a fault, I cannot excuſe my ſelfe.

It pleaſed God Almighty, to make a feareſull Comment on this his owne Text, the very ſame day it was preached by his vnworthieſt ſeruant. The argument was but audible in the morning, before night it was viſible. His holy Pen had long ſince written it with inke, now his hand of Iuſtice expounded it in the Characters of blood, There, was onely a conditionall menace, So it ſhall be: here a terrible remonſtrance, So it is. Sure! He did not meane it for a nine daies wonder. Their ſudden departure out of the World, muſt not ſo ſuddenly depart from the memorie of the World. Woe to that ſoule that ſhall take ſo ſlight a notice of ſo extraordinary a Iudgement. We doe not ſay, They periſhed: Charitie forbid it. But this wee ſay, It is a ſigne of Gods fauour, when hee giues a man Law. Wee paſſe

passe no sentence vpon them, yet let vs take warning by them. The Remarkablenesse would not be neglected; for the Time, the Place, the Persons, the Number, the Maner. Yet still wee conclude not, This was for the transgression of the dead: but this we are sure of, It is meant for the admonition of the liuing.

Such is our Blessed Sauiours conclusion, vpon a paralel instance: Except ye repent, YE shal all LIKEWISE perish. *There is no place safe enough for offenders: but when the Lord is once vp in armes, happy man that can make his owne peace! otherwise, in vaine we hope to runne from the Plague, while we carry the Sinne along with vs. Yet will not our wilfull and bewitched Recusants, from these legible Characters, spell Gods plaine meaning. No impression can bee made in those hearts, that are ordained to perish. For their malicious, causelesse, and vnchristian censures of vs, God forgiue them: our requitall be onely pitie and prayers for them. Howsoeuer they giue out, (and I will not here examine) that their piety is more then ours: Impudence it selfe cannot denie, but our Charitie is greater then theirs. Now the holy feare of God keepe vs in the wayes of Faith and Obedience; that the preparation of Death may neuer preuent our preparation to die. And yet still, after our best endeauour;* From sudden death good Lord deliuer vs all. *Amen.*

T. M.

THE BARREN TREE.

LVKE. Cap. 13. Verſ. 7.

Then ſaid hee to the Dreſſer of his Vineyard; Behold, theſe three yeares I come ſeeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none: cut it downe, why cumbreth it the ground?

NEwes is brought to Chriſt, of a certaine iudgement, which was not more *Pilates*, then Gods, vpon ſome Galileans; who, while they were ſacrificing, were ſacrificed; their blood being mingled with the blood of the beaſts,

on the ſame altar. Leſt this ſhould be wholly attributed to *Pilates* cruelty, without due reſpect had of the omnipotent Iuſtice, hee ſamples it with another; of eighteene men miſcarrying by the fall of a Tower. No *Pilate* threw downe this, here was no humane Executioner: the matter of their death was mortel and ſtones; theſe had no purpoſe to kill them. This therefore, muſt bee an inuiſible hand, working by an inſenſible creature: the Inſtrument may bee diuers, the Iudge is the ſame.

Now, *Pœna paucorum, terror omnium:* as an exhalation drawne from the earth, fired and ſent backe againe to the earth, ſmites onely one place, but terrifieth the whole countrey. So their ruines ſhould be our terrours; let them teach vs, that they may not touch vs. They are hitherto but like *Moſes* his *Rodde* turned into a Serpent: not into a Beare or Lyon, leſt it ſhould haue deuoured *Pharaoh:* but into a Serpent, that hee might be more afraid then hurt. It is Gods ſpeciall fauour to vs, that others bee made examples for vs, and not wee made examples for others. Nothing could teach them, let them teach vs.

Of theſe fearefull Inſtances our Sauiour makes this vſe; ſetting downe a peremptory concluſion: *Vel pœnitendum, vel pereundum:* *Except yee repent, yee ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*

Such

Such vengeance is no way to bee auoyded, but by repentance. But here the Iewes might flatter themselues; If wee be greater sinners then they, how comes it to passe that wee speed better then they? To this silent obiection, Christ makes an Apologicall answere, *verse* 6. You are not spared becausе you are more righteous, but becausе God to you is more gracious. You deserue such or sorer Iudgements; and the reason of this impunitie is not to bee looked for in your innocence, but in the Lordes patience: not becausе you are not worse to him, but becausе hee is better to you: who offers you space and grace to amend, if (at least) at last you will bring foorth the fruites of Repentance.

There be some termes in the Text; (as that the *Vineyard* is the Church, euery Christian a *Fig-tree*, God the *Owner*, euery Pastor a *Dresser:*) wherein your vnderstandings may well preuent my discourse: these known and familiar things I take as granted of all hands.

It is a Parable, therefore not to bee forced euery way, nor made to warrant a conclusion which the Author neuer meant. This were, when it *offers vs the company a myle, to compell it to goe with vs twaine:* or to make Christes Messenger speake our errand. Such is the trade of Rome; what their owne policie hath made necessarie, they will teach God

to make good: this is to picke darkneſſe out of the Sunne. No, *Verificatur in ſenſu ſuo.* like a good creature, it does onely that it was made for. A Parable is not like a Looking-glaſſe, to repreſent all formes and faces: but a well drawne Picture, to remonſtrate that perſon whereof it is a counterfeit. It is like a knife, with the haft it cutts not, with the backe it cuts not, it cuts with the edge. A Candle is made to light vs, not to heate vs: a Stoue is made to heate vs, not to light vs: if this Parable, like the Sunne, may giue both light and heate; the more profitable, the more acceptable.

The Diſtribution.

Then ſayd hee to the Dreſſer, &c. That part of it, to which I limit my preſent Diſcourſe, deliuers it ſelfe to vs in theſe foure paſſages.

A { Conſultation; *Then ſayd hee to the Dreſſer of his Vineyard.*
Complaint. *Behold, theſe three yeeres I come ſeeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none.*
Sentence; *Cut it downe.*
Reaſon; *Why cumbers it the ground?*

1. The Conſultation. *Then ſaid he vnto, &c.* *Dixit, non percuſſit:* hee ſpake, hee ſtroke not: hee might haue ſpared words, and begunne

gunne with wounds. The Tree had rather deſerued the Axe and Fire, then a Conſultation of recouery. How eaſily would man haue reiected his hopeleſſe brother? as when a piece of clay will not worke to his minde, the Potter throwes it away: or wee caſt foule ragges to the dung-hill, little thinking that they may become white paper. But with God, *Verba antecedunt verbera*; hee will bee heard before hee bee felt. Our firſt Parents, when they had ſinned, *Vocem audiuerunt, Heard the voyce of God:* Hee reaſoned with them, before he condemned them. If the fathers word can correct the child, hee will let the rod alone. Wicked men vſe the ſudden Arguments of ſteele and yron; as *Ioab* diſcourſed with *Amaſa, in the fifth ribbe*, they ſpeake Daggers poynts. So *Zedekiah* diſputed with the Prophet, a word and a blow; yea, a blow without a word: he ſtrucke him firſt, and ſpoke to him afterwards. God deales otherwiſe; *Behold, I ſtand at the doore, and knocke:* hee knockes at the doore, does not preſently breake it open. Hee giues vs warning of his Iudgements, that gaue him no warning of our ſinnes. Why doeth hee thus? That wee might ſee our miſerable eſtate, and fall to timely deprecation: that ſo puniſhing our ſelues, wee might ſaue him a labour.

Genel. 3. 8.

2 Sam. 20. 10.

1 Kings 22. 24.

Reuel. 3. 20.

Dixit, non deſtinauit: as if the Lord would

double and repeat his thoughts, before hee decreed it to irreuocable ruine. A diuine preſident of moderation! If he that cannot tranſgreſſe in his wrath, nor exceed in his Iuſtice, will yet *Conſulere amicum*, aduiſe with his friend: how ought fraile man to ſuſpend his furious purpoſes to mature deliberation? It is too common with vs, to attempt dangerous and deſperate actions, without further counſell then our owne greene thoughts. So Anger is made a Solicitor, Paſsion a Iudge, and Raſhneſſe an Executioner. The wiſe man firſt conſiders, then ſpeakes or does: the mad man firſt ſpeakes or does, and then conſiders. Which driues him on neceſſitie to play the after-game; with ſhame and ſorrow to recouer his former eſtate, or giue it loſt for euer. O holy deliberation, whither art thou fled? *Dauids* Harpe did caſt the euill ſpirit out, this would keepe him from euer comming in. It is a Porter at the Gate of Gods ſpirituall Temple, Man; that would be as ſure to keepe out his enemies, as *Dauid* would haue bin ready to let in his friends. How many deſperate precipices of ſin would be preuented, were this Rule remembred; *Conſule Culterem?* For matter of eſtate, we are counſelled by the Lawyer: for health of body, aduiſed by the Phyſician: we truſt the Pilot to ſteere our courſe by Sea, the Surueyor to mete out our Land: but for the ſoule let it be

as

as barren as this Fig-tree, we take no counſell of the Gardiner. Doe worldlings conſult the Preacher, concerning their vſurious trade before they vndertake it? Doe Gallants aduiſe with him, before they meet in *Aceldama*, the field of blood? O that they would admit an anſwere from ſuch a friend, before they giue an anſwere to ſuch an enemy.

Dixit Vinitori. Such is the honour God doth his Miniſters, to acquaint them with his owne purpoſes. *Surely, the Lord will do nothing, but he firſt reuealeth it to his ſeruants, the Prophets.* Nothing; which may conduce to the office of their Miniſtery, and the good of his Church. *To you it is giuen to know the myſteries of the kingdome of Heauen. To you*, not to the world, they haue no ſuch reuelation. *It is giuen*, it's none of your inheritance, you were not borne to it. *To knowe Myſteries, Supere alta*, not common things. *Of the kingdome* (not ſecular; ſuch myſteries are for the knowledge of Stætizing Ieſuites; but) *of heauen. Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I mean to do?* The matter concerned *Sodome*, not *Abraham*: yet was it reuealed to *Abraham*, not to *Sodome*. But doth God need any mans counſell? *Who hath at any time beene his Counſeller?* Will the Potter take aduice of his pots? No; when Chriſt asked *Philip* where ſupply of bread might bee had for the multitude; *This hee ſaid to proouе him: for he him-*

3

Amos 3.7.

Luke 8.10.

Gen. 18.17.

Rom. 11.34.

Iohn 6.6.

himselfe knew what he would doe. His questions are not his, but our satisfactions. Thus doth hee credit his owne Ordinance, teaching the world how to esteeme of them whom himselfe so singularly honors. How poore a place soeuer they finde in mens thoughts, the King of heauen and earth cals them to his counsel.

Numb. 17. *Priest*, was a title whereof the Princes of Israel were ambitious: they would not, euery man haue written his name on his rod, but in hope that this Dignitie might fall to his lot. Now, is the Ministery of the Gospell inferiour to that of the Lawe? Was the seruice of death more glorious then the seruice of life, and saluation? If the Euangelicall Couenant bee better, is the Ministration worse? The Sonnes of the great thinke scorne of such an imployment: what they held an honor, these count a disparagement: In one and the same subiect meets their ambition and our scorne. It is ill when the *Figge-tree* shall despise the *Dresser*, but it would bee farre worse if the *Dresser* should despise the *Fig-tree*.

4. *To the Dresser.* This is the whole Congregation of his Ministers, to whom he hath committed the culture of his Vineyard: all which, by an *Enallage numeri*, are summ'd vp in one *Dresser*. 1. *Quia Cor vnum*, be-

Actes 4.32. cause they haue all one heart. 2. *Quia offi-*

Ephes. 4.12. *cium vnum*; all their labours meet in that one common terme; the *edification of the Body of Christ.*

Christ. 3. It is vſuall to name one *proceteris*, for all the reſt. *Peter* ſayes, *Though I ſhould die with thee, I will not denie thee.* Did *Peter* onely promiſe this? No, but *So ſayd likewiſe the reſt of the Diſciples.* Had not this been a Parable, I neuer found a place of more probable colour for the high Prieſt of Rome to chalenge his vniuerſall Supremacy by. But ſurely, he will neuer *dreſſe* Chriſtes Vineyard, as it ought, vnleſſe in a Parable. Nay, would his Inſtruments forbeare to ſowe it with brambles, to manure it with blood, and to caſt *Nabaoth* out of his own vineyard, it were ſomewhat. But let them paſſe! When the Spirit wrote to a whole Church, he inſcribes his *Epiſtle* vnder one particular name, *Angelo Eccleſiæ*, to the *Angell of the Church.* Math. 26. 35. Reuel. 2. & 3.

To the Dreſſer. Dreſſing implies labour and heedfulneeſſe. I might here touch vpon the Miniſters diligence, that Chriſts Vineyard neuer lie rude and vnpoliſhd through his default. But this age will looke to that well enough: neuer did the Egyptians call ſo faſt vpon the Iſraelites for making of Brickes, as the people call on vs for making of Sermons: & our allowance of materials is much alike. They think it recompenſe bountifull enough to praiſe our paines; as if wee could liue like Camelions, vpon the ſubtill ayre of Commendations. So they ſerue vs as Carriers do their Horſes; lay heauy burdens vpon their 5.

backes, and then hang belles at their eares to make them muſicke. But be our reward little or much, God forbid we ſhould ſlacke *dreſſing* the Vineyard of Ieſus Chriſt.

6 *To the Dreſſer.* Why to him? *Vt intercederet* that he might pleade for the Tree. So vnwilling is God to deſtroy, that hee would haue vs manacle his hands with our prayers: he would bee intreated to forbeare. *Goe thy wayes downe*, for the people which thou broughteſt out of Egypt, *haue corrupted themſelues.* Why this to *Moſes*? That hee might pray for them. He that meant to ſpare them in mercy, meant withall that *Moſes* ſhould bee beholden to him for that mercie. And *Moſes* indeed chargeth the Lord, ſets vpon him with ſo holy a violence, that as if his prayers could *vincere inuincibilem*, he heares. *Let me alone.* O that euery Vine-dreſſer were full of this gracious affection to the trees vnder his charge: yea, who feares God, and in ſome meaſure hath it not? The people forgot *Moſes*, *Moſes* remembers the people: they could be merry and happy without him, he would not be happy without them. Men robbe vs of our meanes, lode vs with reproches: all our reuenge is to ſolicite heauen for them by our ſupplications: they ſue vs, wee ſue for them: they impouerish our temporall condition, wee pray for their eternall ſaluation. Wee could neuer hope for good

Exod. 32. 7.

to

to our ſelues, if wee ſhould not returne them this good for their euill.

Corah had drawne a multitude to rebell againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Moſes* and *Aaron* pray for their rebels. They were worthy of death, and they had it; yet would theſe mercifull Leaders haue preuented it: refuſing to buy their owne peace with the loſſe of ſuch enemies. Yea, they are ſo farre from caruing their owne iuſt reuenge, that they would not haue the Lord to reuenge for them. Let vs fill our hearts with this great Example: the people riſe vp againſt their Paſtors, the Paſtors fall on their faces for the people. Certainly, if God had not meant to heare vs, he would neuer inuite vs to pray. But as it pleaſeth Him to make vs His mouth to you; ſo alſo, your mouth to Him: both to tell you what He doth ſay, and to returne Him what you ſhould ſay; to preach againſt your ſinns; to pray for your ſoules. Doe you heare vs pleade for Chriſt, for Chriſt heares vs plead for you. Indeed, wee are men of polluted lippes and liues: but as Gods power is not ſtraitned through our weakneſſe, ſo, nor is his mercy leſſened through our vnworthineſſe. Therefore as *Paul* had his, *Væ mihi ſi non prædicauero*; Woe vnto mee, *if I Preach not*: So *Moſes*, in effect, had his *Væ mihi, ſi non interceſſero*, woe vnto me, *if I pray not: God forbid I ſhould ceaſe praying for you.* But as all

Numb. 16. 22.

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our Preaching can work no good vpon you, but through the holy Ghoſt: ſo all our Praying can bring no good to you, but through Ieſus Chriſt. Wee pray for you, forget not you to pray for vs. Indeed, weake ones pray with vs, malicious ones pray againſt vs, couetous ones prey vpon vs, fewe pray for vs. We intreat for you, do you intreat for vs; and that onely Mediator betwixt God and man plead for vs all.

The Complaint. *Behold I come, &c.*

This hath in it two paſſages.

His { Acceſſe. *Behold, theſe three yeares, &c.*
{ Succeſſe. *I find none.*

Firſt, the Acceſſe.

1. *Behold. Ecce* is here a note of complaint. Hee that can thunder downe ſinne with vengeance, raines on it ſhowres of complaint. *Behold the Tree*; he might in a moment haue put it paſt beholding, by throwing it into the infernall furnace. Why doth he complain, that can compell? *Habet in manu potentiam, in corde patientiam*: there is power in his hand, but patience in his heart. To do Iuſtice, we (after a ſort) conſtraine him: but his delight is to be merciſull.

He *complaines*. All complain of loſt labors: the Shepheard after all his vigilance, complaines of ſtragling Lambes: the Gardiner after all his diligence, of withering Plants: the Husbandman after all his toyle, of leane Fields,

Fields, and thin Haruests: Merchants after many aduentures, of Wrackes and Pyracies: Tradesmen of bad debtors, and scarcitie of monies: Lawyers complaine of few Clients, and Diuines of fewer Conuerts. Thus wee complaine one of another: but God hath iust cause to complaine of vs all.

Well, if the Lord complaine of Sinne, let not vs make our selues merry with it. Like *Sampson*, it may make vs sport for a while, but will at last pull downe the house vpon our heads. *The voyce of the Turtle is* (not) *heard in our Land. Vox Turturis, vox gemen-tis.* True penitents bee more rare then Turtles. The voyce of the Sparrow wee heare, chirping lust: of the Night-bird, buzzing ignorance: the voyce of the Scriech-owle, croaking blasphemy: of the Popiniay, gawdy pride: the voyce of the Kite and Cormorant, couetousnesse and oppression: these, and other Birdes of that wing bee common. But, *Non audita est vox Turturis:* who mournes for the sinne of the time, and longs to bee freed from the time of sinne? It was an vnhappy spectacle in *Israel*, to see at once, *Lachrymantem Dominum*, and *ridentem populum:* a weeping Sauiour, and deriding sinners. We complaine of our crosses and losses, wee complaine of our maladies, of our iniuries, enemies, miseries: the Lord open our eyes, and soften our hearts, to see and feele

Cant. 2. 12.

the cauſe of all, and to complaine of our ſinnes.

I come. The Lord had often ſent before, now he *came* himſelfe; euen by his perſonall preſence, accepting our nature. The Sonne of God that made vs the Sonnes of men, became the Sonne of man, to make vs the Sons of God. Hee *came* voluntarily: we come into the world, not by our owne wills, but by the will of our parents; Chriſt came by his owne will. He *came* not for his owne benefit, but ours. What profit doth the Sunne receiue by our looking on him? Wee are the better for his light, not hee for our ſight. A ſhower of raine that waters the earth, gets nothing to it ſelfe; the earth fares the better for it. He *came* for our *fruites:* theſe cannot enrich him: *Lord, our well-doing extendeth not to thee.* Pſalm. 16.

Neuer came ſuch an Inhabitant to our Countrey, as *Ieſus.* Had God graunted men the libertie to beg of him what they would, and haue it; they durſt not haue beene ſo bold as to aske his onely Sonne. When the King giues a free conceſſion to his ſubiect, to make choiſe of his owne ſute, without denial; he will not bee ſo impudent as to beg the Prince. Let vs entertaine him well, wee fare the better for him: the profit of our redemption bleſſeth all the reſt vnto vs. Farre bee it from vs to welcome him with ſcandals, with blaſ-

blaſphemies, and neglect. Hee may then reply, as *Abſolon* to *Huſhai*, *Is this thy kindnes to thy friend?* No, you ſay, we make much of him, hold him in the higheſt regard, truſt him with our whole ſaluation. But knowe, Chriſt fares not the better for thy Faith, but for thy Charity. Faith is a beggerly receiuer, Charitie is a rich giuer. Thy Faith is a hand that takes ſomething from him, to enrich thy ſelfe: thy Charitie is a hand that giues ſome thing to him, in his diſtreſſed members. Indeed *Chriſt* is the ſubiect of all tongus, but he is not the obiect of all hearts. The Schoole diſputes of him, the Pulpit preaches of him, Profeſſion talks of him, Profane men ſweare by him, few loue him, few ſerue him. He is *come*, let him bee made welcome, by ſetting our beſt cheere, and choyceſt fruites before him. Whom ſhould we entertaine, if not our Sauiour? 2 Sam. 16. 17.

Seeking. But, did not Hee know before? What need hee ſeeke, that hath found? Hee that *vnderſtands our thoughts long before* they are borne, cannot be neſcious of our workes when they are done. My anſwere ſhall bee ſhort: the Lords *Quærit*, is a *Requirit*: hee doth not ſeeke a thing that is hid from him, but requires a debt that is due vnto him. 3.

Seeking. This is no rare, but a continued act. It is not *Veni*, I came: Hee *came vnto his owne, &c.* Nor a *Venturus ſum*; Yet a little while 4. Iohn 1. 11.

Reuel.12. while, and *I will come.* But ἔρχομαι τύπτων: as *Reuel.*3.20. *Stopulſans, I ſtand knocking:* ſo here, *Venio quærens, I come ſeeking.* Hee *ſeekes* continually: will you heare how long?

5. *Theſe three yeares.* Much time hath beene ſpent about the Interpretation of this time; how it is appliable to the Iewiſh Synagogue, to whom it was immediatly referred. I find no great difference among Expoſitors, ſauing onely in their tearmes. Some by the firſt yeare vnderſtand the time before the Captiuitie; by the ſecond, their returne to Iury; by the laſt, the comming of Chriſt. Some by the firſt yeare, conceiue the Lawe giuen by *Moſes:* By the ſecond, the Propheticall atteſtations: by the third, the grace of our Lord Ieſus. Some reſolue it thus; the firſt yeare was the time of Circumciſion, from *Abraham* to *Moſes:* the next, the Leuitical Law from *Moſes* to *Chriſt:* the laſt is the yeare of Saluation by the *Meſsias.* Others vnderſtand the firſt yeare to bee of the Patriarchs, the middle yeare of the Iudges, the third of the Kings. After all this hee was intreated to forbeare it a *fourth* yeare, till it was inſtructed by the Apoſtles: and then being found fruitleſſe, it was *cut downe* by the Romanes. But I rather take a definite number to be put for an indefinite: *three yeares* is time long enough to wait for the proofe of a tree: ſuch a proportionable expectation had the Lord for

for that Church. If literally you would haue it, I take this to bee the probableſt expoſition. Theſe *three yeares* were the very three yeares of his Preaching, healing diſeaſes, caſting out Deuils, working Miracles before their faces. The other yeare which he added, was the time while the Apoſtles offer'd them the Goſpel of ſaluation. Whereof the refuſers were *cut downe*, the accepters were ſaued.

He hath likewiſe waited for the Church of Chriſtianity *three yeares*; that is, three reuolutions of Ages, thrice fiue hundred yeres. Or he hath tarried the leaſure of the whole world *three yeares*: the firſt yeare, vnder nature: the ſecond, vnder the Law: the third, vnder Grace: the fourth is now a paſſing, and who knowes how farre it is ſpent? 6

Or to apply it to our ſelues, theſe *three yeares* of our viſitation, hath beene ſo many ſcores of yeares. Conceiue the formoſt to be in the dayes of King *Edward* 6. who purged the gold from the ruſt and droſſe of Superſtition, Ignorance, and Cuſſenage, which it had contracted. The Sunne beganne to ſhine out in his bright luſtre: the Lord *came ſeeking* our fruits; but not finding them anſwerable to his expectation, nor worthy of the glorious Goſpell: hee drewe another cloud ouer our Sunne: teaching vs better to value that heauenly *Manna*, wherewith 7.

we were ſo ſuddenly growne wanton. The ſecond yeare, vnder *Queene Elizabeth*, of ſo bleſſed memory: that Royall nurſe, vpon whoſe Boſome the Church of God leaned to take her reſt. Shee did againe vindicate this Vineyard, which had ſo long lyen among Fryars and Monkes, that it had allmoſt quite forgotten the language of Canaan: Shee taught it a new to ſpeake the Dialect of the Holy Ghoſt. When that Gracious Queene was taken from a Crowne of gold to a Diadem of glory, then began our *third yeare*; wherein our preſent Soueraigne was ſent; *Digniſſimus Regno, ſi non natus ad Regnum*: vnder whom we know not, whether our *Truth* or *Peace* bee more. Onely let vs bleſſe him, and bleſſe God for him, that we may all be bleſſed in him. Thus farre we may ſay of our Land, as *Sylvius* did of *Rhodes*; *Semper in Sole ſita eſt*: the bright reflection of the Goſpell compaſſeth vs round about. Now he comes this third yeare *ſeeking* our fruites: which when we conſider, wee can ſay no more but *Miſerere Deus*; Lord bee mercifull to vs: for neuer were ſuch bleſſings requited with ſuch vnthankefulneſſe. We condemne the Iewes for abuſing Chriſts patience: God grant they riſe not vp at the laſt day to condemne vs.

8. He comes to a particular man *three yeeres*.

1. In Youth. I haue planted thee in my Vine-

Vineyard, giuen thee the influence of my mercies; where is thy fruitfulneſſe? Alas, the young man ſends him away, with a *Nondum tempus ſicerum:* it is too earely for me to fall to Mortification; would you put me to pennance, before I haue had the leaſure and pleaſure to offend? He is ready to ſend Chriſt away in the Language of that foule Spirit; *Art thou come to torment mee before my time?* But whoſe charge is it to *Remember thy Creator, Diebus Iuuentutis?* Then the conqueſt is moſt glorious, becauſe then it is moſt difficult. You ſay, It is neuer too late; but I am ſure, It is neuer too ſoone, to be gracious and holy. The Deuill is a falſe Sexton, and ſets backe the clocke of Time in proſperitie: in the day of trouble, hee will make it run faſt enough. 2. In middle age; and now the *buying of Farmes*, and *trying of Beaſts*; the pleaſures of Matrimony, the cares for poſteritie. take vp all the roomes of the ſoule. Men rather buſie themſelues to gather the fruites of earth, then to yeeld the fruites of heauen. Heere is ſtrength of nature, and fulneſſe of ſtature; but ſtill a defect of grace. Perhaps, Chriſt hath now ſome faire promiſes, of fruits heereafter: *Let mee firſt go bury my Father, then.* But (a thouſand to one) he finds ſomething *in Domo*, left by his father, that keepes him *a Domino*, from following his Maſter. To preuent this, it is

Mark.1.24.

Luke.9.61

his caution to the entertained ſeruant ; *Forget thine owne people, and thy fathers houſe :* rather forgoe and forget thy fathers houſe, then thy Makers ſeruice. 3. In old age : now the decay of body ſhould argue a decay of ſinne. The taſte finds no reliſh in ryot, the eares cannot diſtinguiſh Muſicke, the eies are dimme to pleaſing obiects, very *Deſire failes:* now all things promiſe mortification. Hee that cannot ſtirre abroad in the world, what ſhould he doe but recollect himſelfe, and ſettle his thoughts on the world to come? Now fruites, or neuer. Not yet : Moroſitie, Pride, and Auarice, are the three diſeaſes of olde age : men couet moſt, when they haue time to ſpend leaſt : as cheating Tradeſmen then get vp moſt commodities into their hands, when they meane to breake. Still hee *comes ſeeking* fruite, and is returned with a *Non Inuentus.*

Pſal. 45. 10.

9. If yet it weare but as the Prophets *ſigne* to *Hezekiah; This yeare yee ſhall eate ſuch as groweth of it ſelfe : and the ſecond yeare ſuch ſpringeth of the ſame : and in the third yeare yee ſhall ſowe and reape, &c.* the third yeare might afford him ſomewhat. But doth hee forbeare all trees thus long? No, ſome are ſnatch'd away in the flower and pride of their life : yea, they bee not fewe, that will not allow themſelues to liue ; but with ryot and intemperance haſten their owne endes, before they haue

haue well begun or learned what life is: like bad Schollers, that ſlubber out their bookes before they haue learned their leſſons. That in ſtead of, *Non eſt fructus*, wee may ſay, *Non eſt ficus*, the tree it ſelfe is gone. And that goodly perſon, which like a faire ſhip hath bene long a building: and was but yeſterday put to ſea, is to day ſunke in the Maine. We doe not eate, drinke, and ſleepe, and take ſuch refections of nature, *vt non moriamur*, that wee might not die; that is impoſſible: but that wee ſhould not dye barren, but beare ſome fruits vp with vs to him that made the Tree.

Seeking. It is fit wee ſhould offer our fruits to God, and not put him to ſeeke for his owne. We ſhould be like thoſe *ripe-figs, that fall into the mouth of the eater.* The beſt liquours are they that drop from their cells, of their owne accord, without preſſing. The moſt acceptable of all oblations, be the *Free-will-offerings.* Howſoeuer, let vs bee ſure not to diſappoynt the Lord when he *ſeekes.* 10. Nath 3.12.

On this Fig-tree. It is fit, that hee that plants a Vineyard, ſhould taſte of the Wine: good reaſon, his owne tree ſhould yeeld him ſome fruite, conſidering what hee hath done for it he may well challenge it. 11. Prou.27.18.

1 He hath planted vs: wee ſpring not vp naturally; as the Oake growes from an Acorne, the Peach from a ſtone: but a gracious

hand hath ſet vs. *We are not borne of fleſh, nor*
Iohn. 1. *of the will of blood, or of man, but of God.*

2. Hee hath planted vs in his Vineyard within the encloſed Garden of the Church. Had he left vs to the vnregarded wildernes, without any *Dreſſer* to looke to vs, there might haue been ſome excuſe of our barrenneſſe. The ground that is left to it ſelfe, is (in a manner) blameleſſe, though it be fruitleſſe. But *in Vinea ſua*, which he hath fenced in with his prouidence, bleſſed with his ſauing influence, husbanded with his *Dreſſers* diligence, forwarded with the beames of mercy, and ſhowres more precious then the *deawes of Hermon that fell vpon the hill of Sion.* Where wee participate the fatneſſe of the ground, are fed with vnperiſhing Manna, compaſſed about with Songs of deliuerance, and haue *ſeene our deſires vpon* (his and) *our enemies.* Where Righteouſneſſe is our walls, and Peace our bulwarkes, and the wayes bee milke where we ſet our feet.

3 Wee are *Figtrees:* not brambles, no
Math. 7. 16. man expects *Grapes from thornes.* Not Okes or Cedars, to be a dwelling for the Storkes: But *Figtrees*, apt for fruit, for pleaſant fruit. If the reſt be fruitleſſe, they ſerue for other purpoſes: but what ſhall become of the barren *Figtree?*

4. Hee is our Lord, and *Querit ſuum*, he ſeekes but his owne. If our owne King giue

vs no milke, our owne sheepe afford vs no wooll, our owne land returne vs no encrease, we are displeased: whereas these be reasonlesse creatures, but we haue sense aboue common nature, reason aboue sense, grace aboue reason: We are but tennants of these, Christ is Lord of vs: our sinnes bring the curse of barrennesse vpon them, but there is no fault in God, if we be vnfruitfull.

5. He comes *seeking*: not threatning, raging, wounding, not felling downe the tree, nor stocking it vp by the rootes; but *seeking*. *Dignatur expectare fructus, cui licet eradicare Infructuosos.* Man is a loser by the barrennesse of his garden-tree: were there not a tree left, God is neuer the poorer.

Now lay all these together: a *Lord* that owes vs, wee are his trees: to come into his *Vineyard*, where he may be confident; wee liue on his ground: to looke vpon a *Figtree*, made of an apt disposition to good fruit; such a one as himselfe hath *planted*, not casually grown vp: a tree *not neglected*, but whereon hee hath bestowed great care and cost; *waiting*, not destroying: what can we plead for it, if it be fruitlesse? God is our Lord and Proprietary, England is his Vineyard, euery one of vs his Fig-tree, thus planted, watered, blessed by his gracious mercy: Hee comes to vs with patience, that should run to him with penitence: *seeking*

our

our fruites, that ſhould make tender of them vnſought; waiting, that might command: now, feare, obedience, and thankefulneſſe, keepe vs from ſending him backe with a *Non inuenio, I finde none.*

12. *Fruit.* This is that inſeparable effect that God expects from euery Tree planted in his Garden. We are *married to Chriſt*: to what ende? *That we ſhould bring forth fruits vnto God.* Hee ſeekes not for leaues, buds, or bloſſomes, but *fruites.* Could leaues content him, wee would not leaue him vnſatisfied: he ſhould haue an Arbour large enough to reach to *the Worlds ende.* Our tongues runne apace, not ſeldome faſter then our wittes. Wee are Gods debters, and if hee will take our words, ſo: that's all hee is like to haue. Might buds pleaſe him, or bloſſomes: wee haue intentions to good, certaine offers and ſhewes of obedience: which we weare like a cloake, or ſome looſe garment, that when Luſt calls, wee may quickly ſlip off. But when he ſeekes for workes, all our Conſonants be turned into Mutes, we are *ſpeachleſſe.* O would he aske vs for any thing but *fruites*: but what ſhould be expected from the *Figtree*, but *Figges?*

Rom. 7. 4.

Pſalm. 19. 4

Matth. 22. 12

Of euery ſoule here hee ſeekes for *fruites.* Of the Magiſtrate, that he bring foorth the *fruites* of Iuſtice; determining cauſes with ſinceritie of decision, and conuenience of expe-

expedition: being ſo far as equitie permits, a husband to the widdow, and a father to the fatherleſſe. Of the Miniſter, that hee bring forth the *fruits* of knowledge. *Aarons Rod* was his Paſtorall ſtaffe: in one and the ſame night it brought forth buds, and bloſſomes, and *fruit*. Fruitfulneſſe is the beſt argument that God hath called vs: there is not a plant of his ſetting, but the very branches thereof ſhall flouriſh. I doe not ſay, our paynes ſhall alwayes conuert many Soules; that is Gods *fruite*, not ours: Hee chargeth vs to bee induſtrious in Preaching, let Himſelfe alone with the worke of ſauing. Of the priuate man, he expects the *fruit* of his calling: to bee idle, is to bee barren of good; and to bee barren of good, is to bee pregnant of all euill. *Bella gerant alij, Proteſilaus edit*. but let vs that are called to worke, worke in our calling; otherwiſe at laſt, wee ſhall make but a ſorry anſwere to that Queſtion, *Vbi fructus?* Let vs all produce the *fruits* of Charity: rich men doe good turnes to themſelues; as they play at Tenniſſe, toſſing the Ball to him that will toſſe it to them againe: ſeldome to the poore, for they are not able to bandy it backe. Pride cuts, and Ryot ſhuffles, but betwixt them both, they deale the poore but a bad game. The *fruite* of Chriſtianitie is Mercie; when the rich, like full eares of Corne, humble themſelues to the poore

earth in Charitie. Feed him, that feeds you: giue him part of your Temporalls, from whom you expect Eternalls: you cloathe Christ with your blackes on earth, hee will clothe you with his glorious whites in heauen. Our mercie to others, is the *Fruite* of Gods mercy to vs.

13. *Fruite.* Nothing is created for it selfe, but so placed by the most wise prouidence, that it may conferre something to the publique good; though it be but as the Widowes *two Mites* to the *Treasurie.* The poorest creature yeelds some *Fruit*, wherein it doth imitate the goodnesse of the Maker. We know not readily, what good Serpents and Vermine may doe; yet certainly, they haue their *fruit*; both in sucking vp that poyson of the earth, which would be contagious to man; in

Aug. setting off the beautie of the better pieces of creation: (for though the same hand made both the Angels in heauen, and the wormes on earth; yet the Angels appeare the more glorious being so compared) besides their hidden vertues abstracted from our knowledge. Of stones they make yron, rubbish serues to raise Bulwarks, the small pebble for the sling, wormes and flyes are bayts for Fishes: euery thing is enabled with some gift for the vniuersall benefit, and to produce those *fruits* is their naturall worke.

The Sunne comes foorth of his Chamber like

like a Bridegrome, freſh and liuely; and reioyceth as a Gyant, to runne his diurnall courſe, to lighten vs with his refulgent beames, to generate, cheere, and mature things with his parentall heate: this is his *fruite*. In his abſence the Moone and Starres adorne the Canopie of Heauen, reflecting their operatiue influence to quicken the lower world: this is their *fruites*. The curled cloudes, thoſe bottles of raine, thinne as the liquour they containe, flye vp and downe on the wings of the winde, deliuering their moyſt burdens vpon the earth, teats whereon the hungry fields and paſtures doe ſucke; yet they expect no harueſt from vs: this is their *fruites*. The ſubtill winds come puffing out of their cauernes, to make artificiall motions, wholeſome ayres, and nauigable ſeas; yet neither earth, ayre, nor ſea returne them recompence: this is their *fruits*. The earth, in a thankefull imitation of the Heauens, lockes not vp her treaſures within her owne Coffers; but without reſpect of her priuate benefit, is liberall of her allowance, yeelding her fatneſſe and riches to innumerable creatures, that hang on her breaſts, and depend vpon her as their common mother for maintenance: Of the beaſts that feed vpon her, Kine giue vs their milke, Sheepe their wooll: euery one payes a tribute to man, their vſufructuary Lord: this is their *fruites*. Fruit-

bearing Trees ſpend not all their ſappe and moiſture vpon themſelues, or the increaſe of their owne magnitudes: but the principall and purer part of it is concocted into ſome pleaſant *Fruites*; whereof they nor their young Springs euer come to taſte; but they proffer it vs, and when it is ripe, they voluntarily let it fall at their Maſters feete. Neuer did the Oliue annoynt it ſelfe with the owne Oyle, nor the Vine make it ſelfe drunke with the owne Grapes, nor the Tree in my Text, deuoure the owne *Figges:* yet they all ſtriue to abound with *Fruites.*

Let me raiſe your Meditations from earth to heauen: the holy Angels there are called *Miniſtring Spirits:* thoſe royall Armies fight for vs againſt our enemies: like Nurſes, they beare vs vp in their armes, and (though vnſeene) doe glorious Offices for vs: this is part of their *fruit.* The bleſſed Trinitie is alwayes working: *Hitherto my Father worketh, and I worke.* The Father by his prouidence and protection, the Sonne by his mercy and mediation, the Holy Ghoſt by his grace and ſanctification: all diuiding the ſtreames of their goodneſſe, for the beſt behoofe of the world. The more any thing furthers the common good, the more noble is the Nature, and more reſembling the Creator.

Iohn 5.17.

The

The Earth is fruitfull, the Sea, the Ayre, the Heauens are fruitfull; and ſhall not man bring foorth *fruites*, for whom all theſe are fruitfull? While all the Armies of Heauen and Earth are buſied in fructifying; ſhall Man, of more ſingular graces and faculties, be idle, a burden to the world and himſelfe? Both the Church of God for the propagation of pietie, and the world it ſelfe for the vpholding of his eſtate, requires our *Fruites*. If Happineſſe conſiſted in doing nothing, God that meant *Adam* ſo happy, would neuer haue ſet him about buſineſſe: but as Paradiſe was his Store-houſe, ſo alſo his work-houſe: his pleaſure was his taske. There is no ſtate of man that can priuiledge a folded hand: Our life is, *Vita pulueris, non puluinaris*. Landes, Meanes, and Moneyes, men make the protections of Idleneſſe: whereas *Adam* commaunded the whole earth, yet worke expected him. In Paradiſe all things did labour for man, now man muſt labour for all things. *Adam* did worke becauſe he was happy, wee his children muſt worke, that wee may bee happy. Heauen is for ioyes, Hell for paines, Earth for labour. God hath three houſes; this is his Worke-houſe, that aboue is his Ware-houſe. O then let vs bee fruitfull; that others benefit may bee ours, our benefit theirs; and the glory of all, the Lords. If Magiſtrates yeeld not the *Fruits*

of Iuſtice, Miniſters the *fruits* of knowledge, priuate men the *fruits* of Charitie and Obedience; it is as vnnaturall, as if the Sunne ſhould forget to ſhine, or the earth to fructifie. God made all theſe for man, hee made man for himſelfe: of vs he lookes for *Fruit*, of vs let him finde it, from vs accept it, in vs increaſe it, and to vs reward it, through Him, in whome alone wee expect mercie, *Ieſus Chriſt*.

The Succeſſe followes. *Non inuenio.*

We haue brought the Lord into his *Vineyard*, heard him calling for the *Dreſſer*, ſhewing him a *Tree*, telling him of a *three yeares* expectation: now, if after all this we inquire for the euent; himſelfe certifies vs, οὐχ ηὑρίσκω, *I finde none.*

None? Peraduenture he came before the ſeaſon; *Nondum tempus erat Ficorum.* When ſhould a Tree bring forth fruits, but *Tempore ſuo?* This is the praiſe of the good *Tree*, that it *brings foorth the fruit in due ſeaſon.* If the Figge-tree could haue obiected to the Owner, as *Eliſha* to his ſeruant; *Hoccine tempus; Is this a time to plant Vineyards, or gather fruit?* Or as the man replyed to his neighbour, that came to borrowe loaues at midnight; *Is this a time to lend Bread*, when my ſelfe and family are in bed? The Spring is the ſeaſon of fructifying, the Autumne of gathe-

Pſalm. 1. 3.

2 Kings 5. 26

Luke 11. 7.

gathering. When the *time of the ſinging of Birds is come*, Then *the Figtree puts foorth her greene Figges*. But *Cum fermento perfundatur puluis*, when *the duſt is leauened with myre*, and the *bands of Orion* haue lock'd vp the influence of Heauen. Who ſeeks fruit in Winter; hee muſt be content with Winter fruit. There is the Winter of an afflicted Conſcience; no maruell then if neither ripe Figges, nor ſo much as greene leaues appeare: when all the Sappe is retyred to the Roote, as in extreame cold the bloud runnes to the heart to ſuccour it. When the Babylonians required of their captiue Iſraelites ſome Hebrewe Songs, they could ſoone anſwere; *How ſhall wee ſing the Lordes Song in a ſtrange Land?* Is this a time or place to be merry? But did the Lord come out of ſeaſon? No, hee required it not the firſt day, or moneth, but wayted the full time, expecting fruit in the Autumne or Vintage ſeaſon. *Non ante tempus quærit, qui per triennium venit.* Hee came not with a Trienniall Viſitation, as Epiſcopall Fathers vſe to viſite, once in three yeeres; but euery yeare, euery moneth in the yeare, weeke of the moneth, day of the weeke. Of another *Figge-tree* it is ſaid, that *The time of Figges was not yet*, yet hee *curſed* it: Heere the time was three yeares paſt without fruit, yet he curſed it not. But looke to it; If thou wilt not fructifie *Tempore tuo*, thou

Cant. 2. 12.
Iob 38. 38.
Pſal. 137. 4.
Gloſſ.
Marke 11. 13.

Eccles. 7. 17. thou ſhalt be cut down *tempore non tuo*, periſh *before thy time*. There is not a day in the yeare, wherein hee forbeares *ſeeking* our fruit; yet *Venio, non inuenio*, I find none.

2. *None? Nunquid quia male quæſiuit Dominus?* Was there any errour in his ſearch? Men often ſeeke *Bona*, good things, *non bene*, not in a good manner. Either they faile in their *Quando*, as *Ioſeph* ſought Chriſt after a *dayes iourney*; whereas hee is too precious to bee miſſed one houre: Pſal. 32. 6. *They ſhall ſeeke thee Tempore inueniendi, when thou mayeſt be found.* Or in the right *Vbi*: as *Mary* ſought her Son *in Cognatione Carnis, among her kinred*; who was Iohn 2. 39. *in Domo Patris*, in the Temple. So the Papiſts ſeeke now him in Pictures, who promiſed to bee found in the *Scriptures*. Or in their *Quomodo*, as they that ſeeke *aliud præ illo, aliud præ illo*, another inſtead of him, another beſides him, another with him, another before him, which they doe not ſeeke for him. All theſe ſeeke and miſſe, becauſe they ſeeke amiſſe. The world is commonly miſtaken in their ſearch: *Quærunt bona locis non ſuis*, they ſeeke for things out of their proper orbes. Men ſeeke Honour in Pride, whereas Honour is to bee found in Humilitie. They ſeeke reputation in bloodie reuenge; alas, that is to bee found in Patience: *It is the glory of a man to paſſe by an offence.* They ſeeke content in Riches, which is as if one

one ſhould ſeeke for freſh water in the midſt of the Sea. But in none of theſe circumſtances did this *Seeker* faile: not in the *Vbi*, for he ſought in the Vineyard: not in the *Quando*, for he came in the Vintage: not in the *Quomodo*, for he ſought fruit on that Figtree, about which hee had bene at ſo great charges; yet *I finde none.*

None? Haply not ſo thicke with fruites as the *Vines of Engedi*: euery Land is not a Caanan, to flowe with Milke and Honey. But yet ſome competent meaſure, enough to pay the Land-lord rent for the ground it ſtands on; no, *None.* If there bee none to ſpare, whereof the owner may make money; yet, *Sufficiat ad vſum ſuum, ad eſum ſuum*, that hee may eate the labours of his owne hands; no, *None.* If the number bee not *as the Sand*, yet let there bee a *Remnant.* If there cannot bee a whole harueſt, yet let there bee a *Tenth.* If not a Tenth, yet let there bee ſome *gleanings*; and that is a woefull ſcarcitie: if the gleanings bee not allowed, yet let there bee heere and there a Figge, a Grape, a Berry, *on the outmoſt branches*; that the Planter may haue a taſte: It is too defectiue, when *Non florebit ficus*, the Tree doth not *flouriſh*: but *Quando non erit Vua in vitibus, non ficus in ficulneis*: when there ſhall not bee *a Grape on the Vine, nor a Figge on the Tree*; this is a miſe-

3.

Rom.9.27. Eſay 6.13

Mich 7.1

Eſay 17.6.

Hab.3.17.

Ierem.8.13

miſerable ſterilitie. Some thing hath ſome ſauour, but *None* is good for nothing. Indeede all Trees are not equally loaden: there is the meaſure of a hundred, of ſixtie, of thirtie; an *Omer*, and an *Ephah*: but the Sacred deawes of Heauen, the graces of the Goſpell, bleſſe vs from hauing *None. I finde none.*

4 *None?* Peraduenture none ſuch as hee lookes for, no Fruites delicate enough for the Almighties taſte. Indeed, our beſt fruits are neuer perfect and kindly ripened; ſtill they relliſh ſowre and earthly, and ſauour of the Stocke from which they were taken. They are heauenly Plants, but growe in a foraigne and colde Climate, not well concocted, nor worthy the charges and care beſtowed vpon vs. Set Orenge or Figge-trees in this our cold Countrey, the fruit will not quit the coſt of the planting and maintaining. But the complaint is not here of the imperfection or paucitie of fruites, but of the nullitie; *None.* Some reading that Text with idle eyes; that after all our fruites, wee are ſtill *vnprofitable Trees*: becauſe they can finde no validitie of merite in their workes, throwe the Plough in the hedge, and make holyday. But ſhall not the Seruant doe his Maſters buſineſſe; becauſe hee cannot earne his Maſters Inheritance? Shall the Maſon ſay, I will ſhare

Luke 17. 10.

with

with my Soueraigne in his Kingdome, or I will not lay a ſtone in his building? Yet good fruits haue their reward; though not by the merit of the doer, yet by the mercy of the accepter. Sowre they bee of themſelues, but in Chriſt they haue their ſweetning: and the meaneſt fruite, which that great *Angell of the Conenant* ſhall preſent to his Father, with the addition of his owne *precious Incenſe*, are both receiued and rewarded. In their owne nature they may bee corrupt; but being dyed in the bloud of Chriſt, they are made pleaſing to God. Yea, alſo profitable to the Church, and vſefull to men, ſeeme they neuer ſo poore. Euen a troubled Spring doth often quench a diſtreſſed Souldiers thirſt: a ſmal Candle doth good, where the greater Lights bee abſent: and the meaneſt fruite of holy Charity, euen a cuppe (though it be not of the iuyce of the grapes out of the Vineyard, but) of cold water out of the tankard, in the name of Chriſt, ſhall haue the recompence. But heere the complaint is not of the meannes, or fewneſſe, but of the *Barenneſſe*; *None* at all.

Reuel. 8. 4

Math. 10. 42.

None? Euery Tree is knowne by the fruits, it is Chriſts euerlaſting rule. Howſoeuer the tree liues by the ſappe, and not by the fruits: yet it is knowne to liue by the fruits, and not by the ſappe; for this is hidden. *The iuſt man liues by his faith*, not by his workes: but he is

5.

knowne to liue by his works, not by his inuisible faith. Neither doth the fruit make good the tree, but the tree makes good the fruit. *Opera bona non faciunt iustum, Iustus facit bona opera.* Good works make not a man righteous, but the righteous man doth good works. Our persons are iustified before our actions; as of necessitie the tree must be good, before it can beare good fruit. But how shall that tree be discerned, that hath no fruit? *I finde none.*

6 *None?* Why this to vs? Why such a Text in such a time? Wee abound with fruites: which way can you looke, and not haue your eye full of our workes? They before, in such places, haue successiuely commended our fruits. Bee it so: yet *Euripides* being question'd why he alwaies made women bad in his Playes, whereas *Sophocles* euer made them good, in his: answered, *Sophocles* makes them such as they ought to bee, but I make them such as indeed they are. Their former commendation haue told vs what we should be; but this Embleme, I feare, tels vs truely what wee are. Not all of vs; God forbid: here is but one Fig-tree in a whole Vineyard thus taxed, and farre be it from vs to taxe a whole Vineyard for one barren Fig-tree.

7. *None?* Yes, enough of some fruites, but the Prophet calls them *Ficos valde malos, so bad that they cannot be eaten.* As the fruite of

Ier. 24. 2.

the

the Vine is commended for *Quickneſſe*, the fruit of the Oliue for *Fatneſſe*, ſo the fruit of the Fig-tree for *Sweetneſſe*; in *Iothams* Parable. But if it beare not *Fructum natiuitatis ſuæ*, the fruit of the owne kinde, but bitter figges; here had better be none at all. What an vncomfortable ſight is this to Him, whoſe heart is ſet on his Orchard; after the coſt of ſo deare bloud to purchaſe it, after ſuch indulgent care to cheeriſh it, and the charges of ſo many workemen to dreſſe it; yea, after ſo much patience to expect it (ſay the Fig-tree does not beare ſo ſoone as it is planted; in our infancie we can doe nothing, in our minoritie we will doe little, in Gods ſeruice: but now it is growne fructifiable) *Iam non guſtare fructus*, not to haue ſo much as a taſte? Yea, were this all; did barrenneſſe onely vſurpe it: but there is worſe then a meere orbitie or abſence of goodneſſe; a poſition of bitter fruits: *Quæſiui Vuas, inuenio Labruſcas:* I find *wild Grapes*, luxurient fruits. Inſtead of the hearty effects, which Wine produceth, I am anſwered with the melancholy preuarications of malice.

Ephes. 5. 11.

Eſay 5. 3

Behold the wonder and ſpectacle of vnthankefulneſſe; among all Gods Creatures, Man; and among men the barren Chriſtian. *Though Iſrael play the Harlot, yet let not Iudah tranſgreſſe.* What may be expected from the wild Forreſt of Paganiſme, when the Gar-

Hoſea 4. 15.

den of *Eden* yeelds such fruites? The sweet fruit of the Spirituall Fig-tree is *mercie*: our God is the God of Loue, our Sauiour is the Prince of Loue, the Church is knit together in Loue: our Roote is Loue, our Sappe is Loue, our Ligaments Loue: now if we shall sucke the bloud one of another, violate the relations of peace, concoct all our moysture into malice; here is worse then, *Invenio fructum nullum, I finde none*: for *Invenio fructum malum*, I finde cursed fruits. Wee are growne vnnaturall; the hand scratcheth the eye, the mouth biteth the hand: thornes and bryers entwine and embrace one another, while (against all nature) Fig-trees deuoure one another. *Lord, thou didst sow good seed in thy field, whence then hath it Tares?* Here is more fruit then God would haue; but for that he expects, *I finde none.*

Matth. 13. 27.

8 When wee are filled with his blessings, Christ lookes for our prayses; when wee haue *eaten* and *are fat*, that wee should *worship him.* What fruit finds he? *We sit downe to eat and drinke, and rise vp to play*: for praying, playing. When wee are scourged, hee looks for our humiliation and penance; *Sure, in their affliction they will seeke me.* What fruit finds hee? *Lord, thou hast smitten them, but they haue not sorrowed*; an insensible desperatnesse. In this case let vs pray; Lord, lesse of the fruits wee haue, and more of them wee should

Psal. 22. 29.
1 Cor. 10. 7.

Esay 26. 16.

Ier. 5. 3.

Esay. 5.7.

ſhould haue. *Inſtead of righteouſneſſe, a crye:* a cry indeed, a roaring cry of the oppreſſors, and a mourning cry of the oppreſſed. *Hæc non ſunt placido ſuſcipienda ſinu.*

Our Bells ring, our Chimneis ſmoake, our Fields reioyce, our Children dance, our ſelus ſing and play; *Iouis omnia plena.* But when Righteouſneſſe, hath ſowne, and comes to reape, here is no harueſt; οὐχ ἱκανόν, *I finde none.* And as there was neuer leſſe wiſdome in Greece, then in time of the Seuen Wiſe men: ſo neuer leſſe pietie among vs, then now, when vpon good cauſe moſt is expected. When the Sunne is brighteſt the Stars be darkeſt: ſo the cleerer our light, the more gloomy our life with the deeds of darkenes. The Cimerians, that liue in a perpetuall miſt, though they deny a Sunne, are not condemned of impietie, but of ignorance: but *Anaxogoras*, that ſaw the Sunne, and yet denied it, is not condemned of ignorance, but of impietie. Former times were like *Leah*, *bleareeyed*, but *fruitfull*. the preſent, like *Rachel*, *faire*, but *barren*. We giue ſuch acclamation to the Goſpell, that we quite forget to obſerue the Law. As vpon ſome ſolemne Feſtiuall, the Bells are rung in all ſteeples, but then the Clockes are tyed vp: there is a great vntun'd confuſion and clangor, but no man knowes how the time paſſeth, So in this vniuerſall allowance of libertie by the Goſpell,

(which

which indeed reioyceth our hearts, had we the grace of ſober vſage) the Clocks that tel vs how the time paſſes; Truth and Conſcience, that ſhew the bounded vſe, and decent forme of things, are tyed vp, and cannot be heard. Still *Fructum non inuenio, I finde no fruits.* I am ſorry to paſſe the Figtree in this plight: but as I finde it, ſo I muſt leaue it, till the Lord mend it. So I come to

The Sentence. *Cut it downe.*

1. A heauy doome! Alas, will nothing elſe expiate the fault? May not the lopping off ſome ſuperfluities recouer it? Take from the Sinner, the obiect of his vicious error: deface the Harlots beautie, that bewitcheth the Laſciuious: pull the cuppe from the mouth of the Drunkard: Nauſeate the ſtomach of the Ryotous: ſtrip the Popinjay of her pyed Feathers: ruſt the Gold, vaniſh the riches of the Couetous: take away *Micah's gods*, perhaps he will make him no more. If this will not doe, cut off ſome of the armes & branches: weaken his ſtrength, ſicken his body, lay him groaning and bleeding on the bed of ſufferance: griue his heart-ſtrings with the ſenſe and ſorrow of his ſinnes: any thing rather then *Cut it down:* alas no fruit can grow on it then, but ſad deſpaire. A mans houſe is foule, or a little decayed; wil he pul it down or rather repaire it?

There

There is hope of a Tree though the *roote waxe olde in the earth*, and the *ſtock die in the ground*; yet the *ſprings of water* may put new life into it: but once *cut downe*, all hope is cut down with it. When a man hath taken delight in a Tree, conueniently planted in his garden; what varietie of experiments will he vſe, before he *cuts it downe?* Alas, thus poore ſilly men, we reaſon: we meaſure things that be vnmeaſurable, by things that be meaſurable, by things that be miſerable. What wee in a fooliſh pitty would doe, we thinke God in his mercifull wiſdome ſhould doe. Yet which of vs wold endure a dead Tree three yeeres together in his Orchard? We would ſay, If it will not beare fruit, to cheere vs; it ſhall make a fire to warme vs. But the Lord hath bene ſixe and thirtie Moones gracious in his forbearance, giue him now leaue to bee iuſt in his vengeance. If ſo much indulgence cannot recouer it, there is little hope of it: *Cut it downe.* Iob 14.1.

Cut it downe. Who muſt doe this? The *dreſſer*. An vnpleaſing office to him, that hath beſtowed ſo much labour vpon it, eſteemed it ſo precious, hoped for ſome reward at his Maſters hand for his diligence about it; now to giue the fatall blow, to *Cut it downe?* And if it muſt fall, let it be *Manu aliena, non ſua*, let anothers hand doe it. *Hagar* will not behold her dying Sonne; dye he muſt, ſhe was 2.

perſwaded; *Modo non videam, Let me not ſee the death of the Childe.* But hee muſt obey: *Arbor non eſt Culteris, ſed Patris familias:* the Tree is not the *Dreſſers*, but the Lords; and his owne is at his owne diſpoſing: *Cut it downe.*

Genes. 21.

Criſ.

Cut it downe. But how? How can the Miniſter be ſaid to cut downe a barren ſoule? Some may conceiue here a reference to Excommunication: Whether the *Greater*, which deprines a man of all benefit by the Churches publike Prayers, and the Societie of Chriſtians. Which St. *Paul* calls, *Tradere Satanæ, to deliuer vnto Satan:* ſo himſelfe Excommunicated *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, *deliuering them vnto Satan:* a miſerable condition, to be ſubiected to a ſlaue, to a dogge, a drudge; but then eſpecially fearefull, when God grants vnto Satan a Writ or facultie, *Pro excommunicato capiendo.* The ignominy of ignominy; beſides the perill: For as Chriſt protecteth all the Trees in his Vineyard; ſo if any be tranſplanted to the wilde deſart, they are vnder the god of this world. Or the *Leſſe*; which is indeed, no other properly, then an Act of the Churches Diſcipline, whereby ſhe corrects her vnruly children: that ſmarting with the abſence of wonted comforts, they may be humbled by repentance, and ſo recouer their priſtine ſtate. This cenſure may bee either too cruell,

3

1 Cor. 5.

1. Tim. 1. 20.

or

or to triuial. The Church of Rome grants Excommunications for things loſt: a man hath loſt his horſe, he may haue an Excommunication againſt him that detaines him: ſo the Father may hap to Excommunicate his owne Sonne, and for the body of a Iade, hazard the ſoule of his Child. Yea, which is worſe, they publiſh Excommunications for ſinnes not yet committed: The Lord of a Mannor hath ſet a rowe of young Elmes, he may haue an Excommunication againſt all thoſe that ſhall do them any harme. This is to hang a man, before he hath done the fact that deſeruesit. Theſe ir-rite, forceleſſe, bugbeare Excommunications, the ridiculous affordments of a mercenary Power, are not vnlike thoſe old night ſpels, which blind people had from mungrel Witches, to ſet about their Orchards and Houſes, antidotes and charmes againſt theeuing; wherein diſtruſting the prouidence of God, they made themſelues beholding to the Diuell for ſafetie. Creditors, that would bee paid in their moneys, may procure an Excommunication againſt their Debtors, if they pay not by ſuch a day. This were an excellent proiect for you Citizens, a rounder courſe then arreſts and tedious trialls at Law. But it is to bee doubted, that your Debtors would feare the Popes Parchment leſſe then the Scriueners, and an

Approued by the Counc. of Trent, Seſſ 25.

Excommunication farre leſſe then an Outlary. Ther's but foure things exempted from the power of their Excommunication, as *Nauarrus* notes: a Locuſt, an Infidel, the Deuill, and the Pope: ſo he hath matched them, ſo let them goe together. For the Excommunicate muſt be a man, a Chriſtian, mortall, and an Inferiour: now the Locuſt is not a man, the Infidell is not a Chriſtian, the Deuill is not mortall, and the Pope hath no Superior. But too much of that; this is a Parable, and heere is no foundation for ſuch a building.

4 *Cut it downe.* How? with an Axe of martiall yron? This were an expoſition fit for *Doway*, or the Gunpowder-Engineers: that by *Cutting it downe*, vnderſtood, *Blow it vp*: turning their Axe to a Petarre. Had God ſaid to them, *Cut it downe*; the axe had bin inſtantly heaued vp: yea, they did it, when God ſaid no ſuch thing. Rather then faile of cutting it downe, they would haue ſtocked it vp, roote and all: this is their mercie. But the Spirituall Axe is to cut downe, *Culpas, non Animas:* when we reade of *cutting downe*, remember it is meant of mens ſinnes, not of their ſoules. Preachers indeed doe wound; but it is *Gladio oris*, not *ore gladij*. with the Sword of the Spirit, not a *Rouillac's* Knife. If God had ment ſuch a *cutting downe*,

Nero

Nero had bene a fitter inſtrument then *Paul*. We read, that *their ſound went through the World*: but that their Sword went through the World, we neuer read,

Pſal. 19

Cut it downe. How then? *Succide*, that is, *Succidendam minare*; threaten that I will cut it downe. *Caſt them out of my ſight*; *Eijce*, that is, *Eijciendos pronuncia*; ſay that I will reiect them. *Quod moritur, moriatur: Quod ſuccidendum eſt, ſuccidatur, That which dyeth, let it die.* God ſometimes ſends ſuch farewels and defiances to ſinners that will not repent. *Ephraim is ioyned to Idols, let him alone.* If they will not be perſwaded to returne, let them go on to their ruine, let them alone. *If any man will be vniuſt, let him be vniuſt: He that will be filthy, let him be filthy ſtill*; let them periſh. *Abeat, pereat, profundat, perdat.*

5

Iere. 15. 1.

Zach. 11. 9.

Reuel. 22. 11

Cut it downe. This was, *Sententia oris*, the ſentence of the mouth: but it may be this was not *Conſilium cordis*, the purpoſe of his heart. *Sæpe Deominante quod peccans moretur, peccanti non fit quod Deus minatur.* Nor can this taxe God of leuitie: for he that ſpeakes with condition of repentance, may change his word without ſuſpition of lightneſſe. *Tu muto ſententiam tuam, Deus mutabit ſuam.* Thus was *Niniueh* cut downe: *euerſa eſt in malo, vt ædificaretur in bono*: the ſubuerſion was menaced, the conuerſion was intended. The Father ſhuts his rebellions Sonne out of

6

Aug.

doores, will not allow him a lodging, not so much as among his seruants: yet hee does not meane to let him perish with hunger and cold in the streetes: but when he hath well smarted for his disobedience, vpon his humble submission he is re-entertained. The very *mercies of the wicked are cruell*, but the very iudgements of God are sweet. This *Cutting downe*, is *Medicinale*, not *mortale*: *Disciplinans, non eradicans*: for restitution, not destitution; for remidie not for ruine. Indeed, if all this denuntiation and threatning cannot perswade them to returne, then comes their finall prediction: when they haue cut off themselues impenitently, God will cut them off impartially. But if we turne to deprecation and repentance, he will turne to commiseration and forgiuenesse. The Tree is barren, and the Lord saies, *Cut it downe*: the Tree fructifies, and he will say *Let it stand*. O then let vs humble our selues, and with seasonable repentance *Cut downe* our sinnes, that this terrible Sentence may neuer *Cut downe* our soules.

The Reason. *Why cumbreth it the ground?*

I God is an vndependant Lord, and needes not giue a reason of his doings: for who can call him to account, *Cur ita fecis?* His Iudgements are not alwaies manifest, they

Rom. 9. 20. are

are alwaies iuſt: not doth he things becauſe they are good, but they are therefore good becauſe hee doth them. Should hee make ſhort worke on the earth, and diſpatch all barren Trees in a moment: yet *thou continueſt holy, O thou worſhip of Iſrael.* If he ſtrickes vs, we are not wronged, it is our deſert, and his Iuſtice. If he ſpares vs, we haue not merited; It is his mercie. *Huic ſit miſerecordia, tibi non ſit iniuria*: that man receiues mercie, thou haſt no iniurie. Yet that hee might bee iuſtified, and the mouth of all wickednesſe ſtopped, he is content to giue a reaſon of this ſentence. Thinke not I deale hardly with this Fig-tree; let vs conferre together, and heare one another with patience. I will ſhew thee ſufficient reaſon of cutting it downe: doe thou ſhew me ſome cauſe why it ſhould ſtand. My reaſon is, *It cumbers the ground. Terram reddit otioſam, inutilem.* It is not onely barren *Formaliter*, but *Effectiue.* In a word. 1. It does no good. 2. It doth much harme.

First, It does no good, therefore it is vnworthy of the nouriſhment. *Terra bona*, and *Gens mala*; are an ill march: an opulent Land, and a peſtilent People. *Peccator non eſt dignus pane quo veſcitur.* The wicked man is not worthy of the bread hee eates, of the water he drinkes, of the ayre he breathes, of the ground hee goes on. The rich thinkes him- 2 *Aug.*

himselfe worthy of delicate viands, costly garments: dutifull attendance, *Quia Dives*, because he is rich: yet he may not be worthy of a crumme, a rag, a respect, *Quia malus*, because he is euill. It will one day grieue such fruitles *Nabals*, when they must receiue a multiplicitie of torments, according to the number of their abused benefits, and they wil wish that they had not fared so well vpon earth, that they might fare lesse ill in Hell. They liue in the Vineyard, eate the fat, and drinke the sweet; turning all this iuyce, not into fruitfull clusters, for the behoofe of Gods seruants, but into their owne armes and branches: raysing their Houses out of the ruines of Gods House. What good doe they? Cut them downe, *Why cumber they the ground?* Eccles 2. 26. It is fit, that the *Riches of the sinner should bee laid vp for the righteous: dentur dignioribus.*

3. But if God should at once cut down all the barren Trees among vs, there neuer was such a cry in Egypt, as there would be about *London*. What innumerable swarmes of nothing does beleaguer this Citie? men and women, whose whole imployment is, to goe from their beds to the Tap-house, then to the Play-house, where they make a match for the Brothel-house, and from thence to bed againe. To omit those ambulatory Christians, that weare out the Pauement of this great Temple with their feet, but scarse euer touch

touch ſtone of it with their knees; that are neuer further from God, then when they are neereſt the Church. To omit that rabble of begging and pilfring vagabonds, that like beaſts, know no other end of their creation, but recreation; but to eate, and drinke, and ſleepe. What an armie of theſe might bee muſtred out of our Suburbs? But that Idleneſſe hath diſabled them to any ſeruice: they are neither fit for God nor man. Did they yet but like wormes and inſects, ſpend vp the corruption of the Land, and leaue vs the leſſe, it were ſomewhat. But they are worſe, euen diſeaſes and vnwholſome ayres, to breed infection among vs. Let Authority looke to their caſtigation, or anſwere for their miſchiefes: ſo farre as they deſerue, let them not be ſpared; Cut them downe, *Why cumber they the Ground?*

The barren Tree doth no good you ſee; but that is not all: It doth much hurt, and that in two reſpects. 4.

1 It occupies the roome where a better Tree might grow. The Kingdome of God ſhall be taken from you, *and giuen to a Nation that will bring forth the Fruites thereof.* A fruitfull Nation would bee content with ſuch a dwelling. Chriſt foretels this mutation, *Paul* ſhewes it accompliſhed. *They are broken off, that we* (in their places) *might be graffed on. Friend, how cammeſt thou in hither, not hauing* Math. 21. 43. Rom. 11. 19. Math. 22. 12.

on a wedding garment? Why doſt thou vſurp the ſeate, where a worthy gueſt might ſit? Thus *Dauid* vſed to purge his Court; admitting the righteous into the offices of the vnrighteous. As in caſe of calamitie, the godly are deliuered out of trouble, and the wicked *comes in his roome:* ſo in caſe of felicitie, the vngodly ſhall bee turned out of their happineſſe, and the reighteous ſhall come in their ſtead.

Pſal. 101. 8.

A Iudge is corrupt; he is girded with Iuſtice, but the girdle ſaggs to that ſide where the purſe hangeth; God will cut him down; here is roome for a good man, that will doe equitie. A Magiſtrate is partiall, and drawes the Sword of Iuſtice in his owne quarrell; which he puts vp in the cauſe of Chriſt: he muſt be cut downe, here is roome for one that will loue and adhere to the truth. An office is abuſed by him that holds it; hee bought deare and hee cannot ſell cheape: it is time he were cut downe; this place will maintaine a man, that will maintaine the place, with vprightneſſe. A Miniſter is barren, hath no milke in his breaſts: *Miniſterium eius accipiat alter*; Let another take his office; here is roome for one that will feed the people. A prophane Patron will let none into the Lords Vineyard, but at the *Non-licet*-Gate; by which good men will neuer enter: his Clarke ſhall be *Simon*, himſelfe will bee

Acts 1. 20.

Magus:

Magus O vengeance shall cut him downe; heere is roome for one that will freely put faithfull Labourers into the Vineyard. There growes an Oppressor, sculking in a corner; the nedy cannot finde him, or if they doe, they find no fruit from him; Cut him down, here is roome for one that will pitie the poore. The Lord will roote out such bastard Plants, and repleniſh his Garden with fruitfull Trees.

2 It drawes away nouriſhment from better Plants, that would beare vs fruits. For this Christ denounced a woe to those Iewish Clarkes, that keeping the Keies of heauen would *neither enter themselues, nor suffer others.* What should become of them, that wil neither do good, nor suffer good to be done, but cutting downe? A great Oake pines all the vnderwood neere it, yea spoiles the grasse that should feed the cattell. A great Oppressor engrosseth all round about him, till there bee no place left for a fertile Tree. Meane while, himselfe hath onely some leaues, to shaddow his Sychophants; but no fruit, vnlesse Bramble-berries, and such as the Hogs will scarce eate. 6. Matth. 23. 13. Esay 5. 8.

All couet to be great Trees, fewe to bee good. The Bryar would grow vp to the bignesse of the Maple, the Maple would be as tall as the Cedar, the Cedar as strong as the Oake: and these so spread their rootes, till 7.

they ſtarue the reſt by an inſenſible ſoaking. When mother earth, the Church, would deriue her ſap to ſome young hopefull Plant, theſe intercept it. There is maintenance due to the Miniſter, but the barren Impropriator ſtands in his way, & ſucks it al from him: perhaps he leaues him ſome few drops, to coole his temples, but not enough to preſerue life.

8. But the famiſhed tree cries againſt him that drawes the life from it, & yeelds no fruit; and God will heare it, *Abſcinde, cut it downe.* How charitable would *Lazarus* haue bene, had he bene owner of *Dives* his eſtate? How would *Mordecai* haue promoted the good of Iſrael, had he bene as great a fauorite as *Haman* was? How freely would the conſcionable man giue ſpiritual preferments, were he a Patron? He that feares God, would iuſtly render the Church her dues, did he driue ſuch trades, and dwell in ſuch houſes, as you do. But that God, who diſpoſeth all as it pleaſeth him, mend all when it pleaſeth him, euen for his owne mercies ſake.

Thus from a plaine Text I haue deriued you familiar perſwaſions: for I came not hither to ſatisfie the curious head, but the honeſt heart. Admit but two conſiderations more, and I haue done.

9. Firſt the Lord hath ſhewed vs the way to be fruitful, by his owne example. He owes vs nothing: if he withold good things, we cannot

not chalenge him: if he ſends vs good things, we are bound to thanke him. The laſt yeare, how generall was the complaint all ouer this Kingdome? The Mower could not fill his ſythe, nor the binder vp of ſheues his boſome. The beaſts periſhed for want of fodder, yea, children dyed in the ſtreet with hunger: the poore Father not being able with all his weekes labour to buy them (onely) bread. The fields were thin, and the barnes thinner: little in many places there was to gather, and the vnſeaſonable weather preuented the gathering of that little. The emptines of their bowels did iuſtly fill our bowels with compaſſion: Famine is a ſore plague. Wee then cryed vnto the Lord for fruits, and he heard vs: Loe in how plentifull a harueſt hee hath anſwered our deſires, to his owne praiſe, and our comfort! Yea, he concluded all with ſongs and triumphs, a ioyfull harueſt-home; the beſt ſheafe of our Wheat, the beſt grape of the Vintage, the beſt flower of our garland, the beſt fruit of that royall Tree, the ſafe returne of our gracious Prince. Theſe be the fruits of his mercie to vs, where be the fruits of our thankefulneſſe to him?

Secondly, the barren Fig-tree is of all moſt miſerable, and ſo much the more, as it is barren in the Vineyard. The Vine fruitleſſe, is of all trees moſt vſeleſſe. It is compared to noble and worthy things: to the good wo- 10. Ezech. 15.

Pſal. 128.3. John 15.1. Iudg.9.13. man, *Vxor tua ſicut vitis*: to the beſt man, *I am the true vine*: it cheeres the heart of God and man. But if barren it is good for nothing, not ſo much as to make a pinne to hang a hat on. Oakes and Cedars are good for building, Popplars for Pales, very buſhes for hedging, doted wood for firing: but the fruitleſſe Vine

Matth.5.13. is good for nothing. Salt keepes other things from putrefying, but if it ſelfe be putrefyed, what ſhall ſeaſon it? A ſweet Singer delights vs all; but *Quis medebitur cantatori a Serpente percuſſo?* If a Serpent hath ſtung him, who ſhall recouer his voice? If the eye be blind, what ſhall looke to the eye?

Ad nihilum valet, quod non valet ad finem ſuum. It is good for nothing, that is not good for the end it was made. If a knife bee not good to cut, we ſay it is good for nothing: yet may ſome other vſe be inuented for it. If a Plough be not good to breake the ground, we ſay it is good for nothing; yet it may ſtop a gap. If a hound be not good to hunt, we ſay he is good for nothing, yet may he in the night giue warning of a theefe. But if a *Fig-tree*, a Profeſſor be not good for fruit, he is indeed, good for nothing. The refuſe of other things haue their vſes: ſowre Wine will make Vineger, olde Rags make Paper, Lees are for Dyers, Soile is good to fat the Land, Potſheards and broken tiles to mend high waies; all good for ſomewhat: yea, they offer to ſel

the

the combings of haires; Ladies and Gentlewomen know whether they be good for any purpose or no. But the fruitlesse vine, the sauourlesse Salt, the lightlesse Lampe, the Figlesse Figge-tree, the graceleſſe Christian, is good for nothing.

We all haue our Stations in the Vineyard, to bring foorth fruits, but what bee those fruits? It was a smart Inuention of him, [illegible] placed the Emperour, and the *Pope*, reconciled, in their Maiestick Thrones, he brought the States of the world before them. First comes a Counseller of State, with this Motto, *I Aduise you two:* then a Courtier *I Flatter you three:* then a Husbandman, *I Feed you foure*, then a Merchant, *I Cousen you fiue:* then a Lawyer, *I Robbe you sixe*: then a Souldier, *I Fight for you seuen*: then a Physician, *I Kill you eight*: Lastly a Priest, *I absolue you all nine*: This was his Satyre. But in the feare of God, as our Soueraigne doth gouerne vs in Truth and Peace; So let the Counseller aduise, the Iudge censure, the Husbandman labour, Merchant trafficke, the Lawyer plead, the Souldier beare armes, the Diuine preach; all bring forth the fruites of righteousnesse: that this Kingdome may flourish, and bee an exemplary encouragement to our neighbours: that our Children may bee blessed after vs, our Enemies conuinced, Aliens

conuer-

conuerted, Satan confounded, the Gospell honoured, the Lord glorified, and our owne soules eternally saued. Which grace, the happy fruit of the Gospell; and glory, the happie fruit of Grace; God the Father grant vs all for his mercies sake, God the Sonne for his merits sake, God the Holy Ghost for his Names sake: to whom three Persons, and one most glorious God b[illegible] all honour and obedien[illegible] now and for euer.

Amen.

FINIS.

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